

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 PM-09 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 NSC-10 NIC-01 SAJ-01 IO-12 SSO-00

RSR-01 /099 W

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R 121305 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2093

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T BEIRUT 5438

E. O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, LE, UR

SUBJ: SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRESIDENT FRANGIE

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR AZIMOV CALLED ON PRESIDENT FRANGIE AT HIS OWN REQUEST MAY 10. ACCORDING TO NEGIB SADAKA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AZIMOV'S CONVERSATION WAS LARGELY CONFINED TO GENERALITIES. HE EXPRESSED SOVIET CONCERN FOR THE PRESENT SITUATION IN LEBANON, ITS FRIENDSHIP FOR BOTH LEBANESE AND THE RESISTANCE AND ITS HOPE THAT THE SITUATION WOULD BE RESOLVED. HE OUTLINED SOVIET POSITION RE MIDDLE EAST AND UNDERLINED SOVIET SYMPATHY FOR ARAB POSITION.

2. AT THAT POINT FRANGIE INTERRUPTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT NEITHER HE PERSONALLY NOR THE GOL WERE AGAINST THE RESISTANCE OR THE PALESTINE CAUSE. HOWEVER, HIS FIRST RESPONSIBILITY WAS TO LEBANON AND AFTER THAT THE RESISTANCE. HE THEN TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE FOUND IT VERY STRANGE THAT THE FEDAYEEN SHOULD HAVE HEAVY WEAPONS AND MUCH ARMAMENT IN CAMPS AROUND BEIRUT WHICH WAS SOME 100 KILOMETERS FROM THE ISRAELI BORDER. HE COULD ONLY CONCLUDE THAT THESE WEAPONS WERE NOT FOR USE AGAINST ISRAEL BUT AGAINST LEBANON. THIS

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WAS HIS GREAT CONCERN.

3. WITHOUT RESPONDING TO FRANGIE' S REMARKS, THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR CHANGED SUBJECT AND DISCUSSED SYRIA AND THE CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WHICH THE SOVIETS ENJOYED WITH THAT COUNTRY. FOREIGN MINISTER ABOUHAMAD, WHO ATTENDED MEETING, EXPLAINED THAT THE SYRIANS WERE NOT BEING HELPFUL IN THE PRESENT CRISIS AND WERE PERMITTING EQUIPMENT AND MEN TO PASS INTO LEBANON. IF THE SOVIETS WERE THE FRIENDS OF BOTH LEBANON AND SYRIA HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE SOVIETS COULD NOT COUNSEL THE SYRIANS AGAINST SUCH ACTIVITY.

3. AGAIN THERE WAS NO RESPONSE FROM THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER' S REMARKS; AND THE CONVERSATION ENDED AT THAT POINT WITH THE AMBASSADOR ASKING TO BE RECEIVED AGAIN MAY 12.

4. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR MAINTAINED " EVEN HANDED" POSITION BY MAKING SIMILAR CALL ON ARAFAT SAME DAY.

COMMENT: IT IS NOT QUITE CLEAR WHAT PURPOSE OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR' S CALL WAS. HE CERTAINLY MADE NO POINTS WITH EITHER THE PRESIDENT OR THE FOREIGN MINISTER. ACCORDING TO SADAKA, HE MADE NO OFFER OF ASSISTANCE OR RECOMMENDATIONS RE HANDLING ANY ASPECT OF THE CRISIS. ASSUME HIS REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT MAY 12 WAS TO GIVE HIM TIME TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS RE POINTS RAISED BY PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER.
HOUGHTON

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NMAFVVZCZ

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*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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